

PHASE I CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY
SITE ASSESSMENT AND SITE IDENTIFICATION PHASES
SUPPLEMENTARY PHASE IB FIELD INVESTIGATION
LIMITED PHASE II SITE EVALUATION STUDY
PROPOSED COVINGTON DEVELOPMENT PROPERTY
TOWN OF NEW WINDSOR, ORANGE COUNTY, NEW YORK

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INTRODUCTORY SUMMARY

Residential development with community facilities is proposed for a parcel encompassing approximately 25 acres (10 hectares) located east of NYS 300 and west of the Consolidated Rail tracks near the southern limits of the Town of New Windsor in eastern Orange County, New York. Silver Stream flows parallel to the western limits before crossing the southern portion of the parcel and Moodna Creek is located roughly 5000 feet (1.5 kilometers) southeast of the parcel.

A Phase IA cultural resources survey was performed in September 2001 by Columbia Heritage, Ltd. of Newburgh, New York to assess the potential for project impact to cultural resources. A potential for the presence of buried Native American cultural remains was identified based on the occurrence of documented indigenous sites in this part of the Moodna drainage and the fact that the physiographic character of the flatter, better drained portions of the study area is known to be associated with indigenous site selection in the region. A potential for the presence of buried eighteenth century military-related cultural remains was identified based on the proximity of the study area to the New Windsor Cantonment Historic Site.

The area to be developed consists of gently to moderately to steeply sloping former pasture land, characterized by numerous rock outcroppings and surface glacial rock deposits.

To determine whether Native and/or European American era buried cultural remains are indeed present within the study area, a Phase IB site identification survey was carried out in October 2001 by Columbia Heritage, Ltd. A grid of screened shovel tests was placed across the affected area. No Native American cultural material was encountered in archaeological context. Sparse, scattered European-American era items and structural remains dating from the twentieth century were encountered south of the fieldstone-lined roadway that crosses the northern part of the study area. Two items possibly dating from the eighteenth or early nineteenth century were recovered from the northeastern portion of the parcel, where an oral account indicates architectural remains associated with a small structure are located.

Based on these items and because a Revolutionary War era building is reputed to have stood in the vicinity of the old fieldstone-lined roadway that crosses this part of the parcel, additional, more intensive archaeological investigation was

recommended for this portion of the project area to determine whether these finds may in fact be associated with a site of focused cultural activity, to establish the spatial extent of such a cultural deposit, and finally to determine whether the site retains archaeological integrity and whether it is likely to contain significant cultural information. This would allow the site to be evaluated with regard to satisfying National Register of Historic Places criteria for eligibility.

As an initial step in this process, and to determine whether a Phase II study was in fact warranted, supplementary Phase IB investigation was carried out in the vicinity of the items recovered during the late autumn and winter of 2001/2002 in an effort to establish whether these finds represented focused cultural activity and, if so, to shed light on the spatial extent and character of the site present.

Systematic close interval screened shovel sampling of the area around the six finds failed to produce any additional cultural material potentially dating from the Revolutionary War period. Based on this evidence, it was concluded that these finds are not associated with the Provost's Post or other Revolutionary War era focused cultural activity but represent casual late eighteenth or early nineteenth century deposition.

Taking advantage of the far better visibility afforded by late autumn conditions, systematic walking reconnaissance of higher ground overlooking the old roadway was carried out and anomalies appearing to possibly be associated with the remains of human construction efforts were sampled. Further supplementary Phase IB sampling carried out here recovered badly oxidized nails and burned, sawn wood, considered to possibly represent the remains of a wooden construction. Possibly associated with a platform built into a natural rock outcrop, these remains were encountered just southwest of and overlooking the old roadway.

Based on oral historical information and the character of the find, this was considered to represent a second potential location for the site of the Provost's Post discussed in the Phase IA site assessment study. Additional supplementary Phase IB sampling was carried out in this area and a limited tightly-focused Phase II investigation of the subarea was recommended. This effort was carried out in the spring of 2002 by Columbia Heritage, Ltd. Following consultation with OPRHP, the subarea was systematically swept using a metal detector, potential finds investigated by shovel tests, and two archaeological excavation units executed in the area of greatest cultural resource potential. Results indicated

the cultural remains pertain to twentieth century cultural activity, possibly associated with a tree stand erected by hunters. No Revolutionary War era items were recovered.

Based on these findings, proposed development is seen to have no effect on potentially significant buried cultural resources. No further archaeological investigation is recommended.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The proposed Harp Estates residential development encompasses some 25 acres (10 hectares) of rocky, undulating terrain in the southern portion of the Town of New Windsor in eastern Orange County, New York. The study area is bounded on the west by NYS Route 300 and on the east by tracks currently belonging to Consolidated Railroad. The Continental Manor residential development lies to the north, another residential development is located beyond the railroad to the east and to the south is a mix of commercial and residential structures. Wetlands associated with Silver Stream lie to the west across NYS 300 and extend into the southern portion of the study area.

As noted above, the southernmost part of the study area contains low-lying wetlands associated with Silver Stream, which crosses the property on its way to join Moodna Creek slightly less than a mile (1.6 kilometers) to the southeast. The elevation of the study area rises toward the north and northwest, and the terrain is characterized by a series of rocky, fairly steeply sloping knobs separated by flatter areas. Almost the entire parcel is covered by young forest and scrub vegetation, with several grassy subareas. Mature trees are also present, either singly or along the several dry-laid field stone farm walls that cross the study area.

This portion of the Wallkill Valley area of the Hudson-Mohawk Lowland region of New York State is geologically characterized by shale and shaly sandstone bedrock covered by glacial drift (Thompson 1966:31). Deep acid soils on glacial till are found in better drained locations; wetlands soils consist of clay and dense silt.

The project area is bounded on the north and east by dry-laid field stone farm walls that also subdivide the interior of the parcel into sections. Walking site reconnaissance noted no serious disturbance of upper soils with the exception of very localized mechanically-dug test holes that had recently been placed around the site. Proposed development would involve the construction of semi-detached single family homes grouped around a looping access road and a courtyard.

This Phase IA site assessment was performed in September 2001 by the Principal Investigator using resources of the Newburgh Free Library, the Orange County Historical Society in Goshen, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic

Preservation and the New York State Museum. A walking reconnaissance of the study area was carried out, during which the relative archaeological potential of various subareas was assessed, any prior disturbance and other factors likely to reduce such potential were noted, and any structures with a view of the proposed development that meet minimal age criteria for inclusion on the State and National Register of Historic Places were photodocumented.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

As mentioned, the study area consists of rocky knobs with moderately steep to steep slopes, flatter areas, and poorly drained and wetland areas in the vicinity of Silver Stream in the southernmost portion of the parcel.

The more poorly drained southernmost portion of the study area is populated primarily by dense scrub and young forest growth. Greater numbers of mature trees and less dense undergrowth characterize the more elevated terrain to the north, which also contains a series of dry-laid field stone farm walls.

Historic Structures

No buildings that have been determined by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) to meet the criteria for State and National Register listing are located within view of the proposed development, nor are any unevaluated structures that meet minimum age requirements for potential eligibility.

Native American Era

Two sites of Native American occupation have been documented along the north bank of Moodna Creek approximately one mile (1.6 kilometers) of the study area. Known as the Moodna Creek Site (NYSM 563) and the Nicoll Farm Site (NYSM 561), these sites have been listed in several site files over the years but little information regarding their temporal, functional or cultural character is known. Other Native American sites have been reported for the lower portion of Moodna Creek near its outlet into the Hudson River, some two miles from the study area. It should be noted that no systematic professional archaeological survey has ever been carried out for this area and the number and distribution of known occupation sites is likely to underrepresent the actual extent of indigenous cultural activity remains. This would be especially true for tributary watercourses such as Silver Stream, where no surveys have taken place.

In the absence of systematic professional surveys, knowledge regarding the occurrence of indigenous occupation sites has come from local residents, avocational archaeologists and a few tightly focused efforts such as the present study, that have been associated with the potential effects of specific development projects (Ross 1988, Santangelo 1989, Hunter and Porter 1989).

The potential must therefore be recognized that flatter, better drained portions of the study area, particularly in the vicinity of Silver Stream and its associated wetlands, had at some time been occupied by indigenous inhabitants of the region. Although larger settlements might have been present during later periods, such sites would most likely have been camps that were seasonally occupied by small groups exploiting the plant and animal resources offered by this setting, as well as specialty resources such as lithic deposits. Such occupations would most likely have been a component in the seasonal pattern of movement that characterized indigenous populations during the Archaic and Transitional periods, which extended from around 3000BC to 800BC, although such small seasonal occupation sites were also present during later times.

As noted, Native American archaeological remains likely to be present in the study area are most likely to consist of small, seasonally occupied camps that would have supported small numbers of people for short periods of time, probably on a recurring basis. Cultural remains associated with such sites typically are sparse, shallow and spatially restricted although they may include hearths, storage pits and/or traces of structures. Larger sites, generally associated with the later Woodland period, may also include extensive refuse deposits and fortifications. Accessible veins of lithic resources suitable for the manufacture of stone tools and rock formations such as caves and overhangs that could provide shelter are also likely to have served the indigenous population of the area. The physiographic character of the affected area does not include exposed bedrock overhangs, which precludes the presence of rockshelters. The glacially deposited boulders present on the ground surface and the bedrock outcroppings noted in reconnaissance might have provided indigenous inhabitants with lithic material suitable for producing stone tools. No exposed sources of chert or other varieties of stone known to have been used in native lithic technology were noted on the site.

European-American Era

European-American era settlement of this portion of Orange County dates from the last decades of the seventeenth century. The mouth of Moodna Creek and the portion of the Hudson River northward to New Windsor were among the earliest portions of Orange County to be occupied. Local industry developed at Orangeville, near the mouth of the Moodna, and Plum Point served as one of the most important early river ports in the

area. Other industrial development prior to the American Revolution was focused along streams with sufficient current to drive water-powered machines.

The New Windsor Cantonment, the site of the last encampment of the American Army during the winter of 1782-83, was located in the part of the township. The New Windsor Cantonment Historic Site and the Temple Hill Monument lie less than one mile (1.6 kilometers) to the north, the Knox Headquarters Historic Site less than one mile to the southeast, and other sites of troop activity are known for the Silver Stream area between the present routes of NYS 300 and the New York State Thruway, northwest and south of the study area.

During the early nineteenth century, industrial and commercial hamlets such as Little Britain, Washington Square, Salisbury Mills, and Orrs Mills developed farther west from the Hudson River. Settlement outside these small nucleated centers was characterized by dispersed farmsteads with buildings usually located along roadways. The present course of NYS 300 dates from the twentieth century. However, NYS 32 to the east, known as Snake Hill Road, dates from at least the early nineteenth century, as does a roadway that crossed the north portion of the study area along a route now proposed for part of the east/west access road for the Harp Estates development.

Nineteenth century maps of the area depict no structures standing along these roads in or adjacent to the study area and no structural remains were noted in reconnaissance. The property north of the roadway is noted to have belonged to the McGill family during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The area to the south is shown to belong to Burnhain and later to have been part of the holdings of Dr. John D. Malone at the turn of the twentieth century. The tracks formerly part of the Newburgh Branch of the Erie Railroad, built during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, form the eastern boundary of the study area. At least the eastern stone field wall, which runs along the top of the cut bank at the base of which the tracks were laid, appears to date from the era of railroad construction. The stone walls that line the roadway are likely to date from prior to this time, based on field observation.

Reconnaissance identified no structural remains or anomalies that might indicate the buried remains of buildings within the study area. The dry-laid fieldstone walls along the eastern and northern limits of the property and delineating various internal subareas on the parcel have been previously mentioned.

Discussions with Glen Marshall, Town of New Windsor Historian, regarding the potential for the property to contain early structures indicate a Provost's Post, built to control access to the Last Encampment along the old roadway that crosses the northern portion of the parcel, stood on a relative high spot overlooking the road (personal communication). Based on the absence of depicted structures within the study area, at least since the publication of detailed maps of the area in the middle of the nineteenth century, there is no evidence to indicate any other buildings stood within the project limits. No evidence of visible remains of foundations or anomalies that might indicate the presence of buried structures was noted in reconnaissance.

With the exception of the small building mentioned by Mr. Marshall, there is no evidence to indicate the presence of other buried European American era cultural remains. However, the proximity of the study area to the Last Encampment and the dispersed nature of this military camp occupation raises the potential for buried cultural remains associated with the Revolutionary War era to be present anywhere in this part of the Township. These resources may consist of huts or outdoor activity areas, such as refuse deposits or latrines. Since early buildings were usually located along roadways, potential does exist for remains of undocumented structures, razed prior to the 1851 publication of Sidney's map of the county, to have stood in the northern portion of the study area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A Phase IB site identification survey is recommended for the portions of the affected area not characterized by steeper slopes, heavy concentration of surface rock, standing surface water or poor drainage. Such locations are considered to have a potential for containing buried Native American cultural remains, as well as possibly the presence of early European American era sites. Such a survey should employ sampling methods adequate for detecting traces of the small, seasonally occupied camps likely to occur in this physiographic setting as well as Revolutionary War military sites, cabins, and activity areas associated with the early period of European American settlement.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Flatter, better-drained locations near a water source have been found to have been preferred by indigenous populations in the Northeast for occupations ranging from small camps to villages. In times of turmoil, defensive considerations were added to these criteria. Steeply sloping and poorly drained areas or wetlands would generally be seen as of low potential for the occurrence of Native American cultural resources.

Exceptions to this assessment would include steeply sloping locations where lithic resources such as chert would have been accessible to indigenous populations and/or where rock overhangs and caves that could have served as shelters are present. Although poorly drained areas would seldom be expected to contain habitation sites, the more elevated, better drained peripheries of such places are likely to have been selected as camps from which the plant and animal resources of the wetter areas would be exploited. Such camps would have served as temporary habitation sites and locations where food was prepared, tools completed and repaired and animal resources processed (e.g., skinned, butchered, dried, smoked) after being procured nearby.

Smaller sites, which predominate prior to the later Woodland Period and continue to occur during that time, are known to have been occupied by indigenous populations in conjunction with what was usually a seasonal exploitation of plant and animal resources. Generally, these camps would be inhabited for short periods of time, although such episodes of occupation are known to have continued on a periodic basis over many centuries.

The inventory of reported archaeological sites for this area indicates that Native American occupation of this part of what is today the Town of New Windsor persisted from at least Archaic times through the Late Woodland period (3000BC-AD1600) and into the European American era of occupation. Therefore, the temporal and cultural affiliation of Native American era archaeological remains that might be expected to occur in this portion of the Moodna Creek drainage could represent all but the earliest phases of human culture in the region.

As mentioned above, occupation through at least the Middle Woodland Period was considered likely to have occurred on a seasonal basis and to have been usually associated with

the exploitation of nearby plant and animal resources. The material remains of sites that reflect such behavior are most likely to be sparse, shallow and spatially restricted, although deeper cultural features and remains of structures may be present. Larger sites, usually pertaining to Woodland period occupations, may include deep refuse deposits, remains of more substantial structures and defensive constructions, such as stockades.

Despite the presence of bedrock outcrops and glacial rock deposits across the study area, reconnaissance had revealed no outcrops of lithic material likely to have been utilized in the manufacture of stone tools. The potential for native quarry sites within the affected area was therefore considered low. The absence of caves and rock overhangs within the study area eliminated the potential for shelters associated with such features to be subject to project impact.

Because this portion of the township was settled during the first half of the eighteenth century, the potential for very early European-American era sites must be recognized. The potential for such sites is much greater along early roads and sources of water power that could be harnessed by early industries. In addition, the proximity of the New Windsor Cantonment, the last encampment of the Continental Army, creates the potential for Revolutionary War era military related cultural remains to be present.

Like smaller Native American sites, the archaeological remains of early buildings and military-related sites would be expected to be spatially restricted and often characterized by sparse cultural material likely to be quite shallow. The methods selected for archaeological field investigation would therefore need to be sensitive enough to detect the presence of these smaller Native and European American era sites characterized by relatively sparse cultural material, as well as larger sites.

METHODOLOGY

The affected area is characterized by gently to moderately sloping terrain with various more steeply sloping subareas scattered around the property. Steep slopes occur along the western margin of the parcel, as part of a descent to a wetland associated with Silver Stream that is located across NYS 300 (Temple Hill Road), and in the interior of the project area as part of a series of elevated bedrock ridges. Steep cut banks, created in association with highway and railroad construction, are found along the western and eastern edges of the parcel, respectively. Areas to be affected by proposed development consist of former pasture, now overgrown and populated mostly by young forest and scrub, punctuated by mature trees. Dry-laid fieldstone farm walls cross the study area. Most are oriented roughly north/south and east/west, dividing the land south of the stone wall-lined old road into five unequal subareas.

Due to its forested and rocky nature, it was unfeasible to prepare any of the study area for archaeological inspection. Consequently, test hole sampling was chosen as the method by which the Phase IB survey would be carried out. Hand-dug shovel test holes would be placed systematically across the portions of the development area identified as having the potential for containing buried cultural resources. Holes would be placed intervals of 30 to 50 feet (10-15 meters) and all test hole contents would be screened through $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch (6.25 millimeter) hardware cloth to facilitate the recovery of smaller cultural items.

The area around any test holes from which Native American or Colonial Period cultural material were recovered would be more intensively sampled, initially by means of four additional shovel tests placed at cardinal points around each find spot. This first component of additional sampling would be carried out at 20 to 26 foot (6-8 meter) intervals. If no additional cultural material were recovered, the interval would be reduced to 10 to 12.5 feet (3-4 meters) in an effort to determine whether a site of cultural activity or a stray find was indicated.

Portions of the proposed construction impact area found to be characterized by excessively steep slopes, rocky surface or poor drainage would be excluded from archaeological sampling. This would include the southernmost portion of the property, which consists of wetlands bordering Silver Stream, and the

steeply sloping subareas discussed above. Also excluded were localized subareas of upper soil dislocation, associated with mechanical subsurface investigation, and the area just north of the wetlands, which is crossed by a buried sanitary sewer.

These methods are considered adequate for detecting traces of smaller Native American camps, special purpose sites and early Euro-American sites as well as any larger Native or European American era occupations that might be present. Evidence of more casual human activity and remains of very small buildings, such as privies, are less likely to be detected by this method. However, it is likely that the latter class of cultural remains, particularly if associated with nineteenth or twentieth century occupation, would be characterized by an accompanying relatively concentrated array of cultural items that would point to the presence of focused cultural activity and trigger further subsurface investigation. This would, in turn, be likely to lead to the identification of these more elusive types of cultural resources.

Soils present within subareas identified as having the potential to contain buried cultural resources are made up of glacial deposits on or just beneath the present ground surface and often shallow above bedrock. This indicates it is very unlikely for deeply buried potential culture bearing soils to be present.

FIELD INVESTIGATION

Phase IB field investigation of the proposed development impact area was carried out in October 2001 by the Principal Investigator assisted by Archibald Miller. Field conditions were excellent, temperatures ranging between 60 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit (15.5 and 21 degrees Celsius), sunny to partly cloudy to overcast, with light to moderate winds. In most places not subjected to serious prior upper soil dislocation ground visibility was poor due to grasses in more open areas and leaf mat in wooded places. Due in part to autumn field conditions, scrub vegetation was of light to moderate density, so that any low stone walls, cellar holes or other buried structural features would have been sufficiently visible to be identified in reconnaissance. Soils were very dry due to a lack of rain.

Shovel tests were systematically dug at approximately 50-foot (15-meter) intervals in a grid pattern across the affected area, with modifications as appropriate to avoid locations excluded due to surface rock, steep slope or prior serious disturbance of upper soils and to follow topographic contours.

The hand-dug shovel test holes measured approximately 24 inches (60 centimeters) in diameter and were terminated once culturally sterile soils had been penetrated. Soils were found to be generally very dry due to an extended period without significant rainfall, with some moisture present in the vicinity of the more poorly drained southern area. Subsurface sampling transects were aligned roughly north/south across the portion of the affected area south of the old road and generally northeast/southwest to the north of this feature. To facilitate record keeping and reference, these two portions of the property were designated Sampling Sector A and Sampling Sector B, respectively. Subsurface testing locations are shown on the accompanying project map.

Culturally sterile soil consisted of tan, tan yellow, yellow, yellow tan, orange tan and orange yellow silt, sometimes with a trace of sand, sometimes with coarse, medium and fine gravel, and grey to blue grey clay, sometimes with some silt in poorly drained locations in the southernmost and northeasternmost portions of the area sampled.

Upper soils consisted dark brown to red brown silty root and leaf mat in most areas, underlain by medium brown, tan brown, grey brown, yellow brown, olive tan, and grey tan silt, sandy

silt or silt with a trace of sand, sometimes with very dense coarse medium and fine gravels, often cobbles and/or boulders.

Culturally sterile soil was encountered at depths ranging between 4 and 9.6 inches (10 and 24 centimeters) beneath the ground surface. Culturally sterile soils were encountered at relatively consistent depths, with shallowest soils found on slopes and elevated features and no evidence of a plow zone noted.

No Native American cultural material was encountered in archaeological sampling. One chert reduction flake was noted on the ground surface against a tree stump. Its exotic blue green color and presence in a non-archaeological context imply the piece of debitage was recently deposited in the location in which it was encountered. Close-interval sampling of the immediate vicinity of the flake, consisting of five screened shovel tests dug within 12.5 feet (4.0 meters) of the find spot, failed to produce any additional cultural material.

Very few pieces relating to the European American era were encountered. Isolated twentieth century items were recovered in widely scattered locations in Sector A. Sporadic surface deposition of middle to late twentieth century refuse was noted in the southernmost area near the sewer line, along the railroad on the east, the current roadway on the west, as well as along the pavement in the southwestern corner of the parcel, associated with the former course of Temple Hill Road, abandoned during the World War II era when the present roadway was constructed. With the exception of the fieldstone walls lining the former Old Temple Hill Road that form the northern limits of Sector A and a series of fieldstone farm walls that cross various areas of the property, no other structural remains and no anomalies likely to be associated with buried remains of former structures were noted in Sector A.

A small quantity of what may well represent much earlier European American era material was encountered in Sampling Sector B. Four pieces of dark green bottle glass and two possibly hand-wrought iron nails were recovered from three test holes dug in the vicinity of an elevated outcrop feature that overlooks the stone wall-lined former roadway.

Although not as finely diagnostic of time period as some other types of cultural material, these items are seen to be possibly associated with eighteenth or early nineteenth century activity, particularly if the badly-oxydized nails were in fact hand-wrought. Possible structural remains, consisting of several dry-laid field stones placed on top of one another and forming a roughly 90-degree angle were also identified in this area, as was evidence of relatively recent excavation, most likely to have been executed using hand tools.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The fact that no Native American cultural material was recovered in sampling of the areas identified as having the potential for containing buried cultural remains indicates proposed residential development will have no effect on cultural resources relating to this phase of human occupation. The one reduction flake encountered was recovered from a non-archaeological context and appears to represent an exotic chert not found in this general area that had been placed where it was found. Based on the lack of additional cultural material encountered in intensive sampling of its vicinity, the flake is interpreted as having been recently brought to and deposited at the surface location where it was encountered, possibly from another site, and does not appear to relate to the indigenous cultural activity where it was found.

The small number of European American era items encountered in Sector A, the fact that they were recovered in a widely scattered context and pertain to the middle and late twentieth century, indicate there will be no project impact to areas of focused human activity or early settlement in areas sampled.

The recovery in Sampling Sector B of cultural remains that appear to represent an earlier period of European American occupation and the fact that the vicinity of the old roadway is known to have seen focused eighteenth and early nineteenth century cultural activity marked this subarea as a potential site of buried cultural remains. The relatively recent excavations noted adjacent to the railroad line are seen to reflect informal digging at the site by seekers of historical artifacts.

More intensive archaeological investigation was recommended for the vicinity of the finds associated with the eighteenth and/or early nineteenth century to determine whether they are associated with an Encampment-era structure or focused cultural activity pertaining to an earlier or later time.

SUPPLEMENTARY PHASE IB SAMPLING

The stone-lined former roadway, a segment of Old Temple Hill Road, served as the main entrance to the New Windsor Cantonment during its occupation by the Continental Army, as well as a major local thoroughfare before and after this period. As noted, the vicinity of the old roadway is known to have been the site of a building used by the Provost during the Last Encampment. As also discussed earlier, the remains of early civilian and military sites are often characterized by a sparseness of cultural items and minimal structural remains. For this reason, the archaeological remains of such sites often prove elusive. The recovery of even a small quantity of cultural material that may relate to such sites, as in the case of smaller Native American era camps, must therefore be considered of potential significance.

The recovery of items that appear to represent eighteenth or early nineteenth century deposition in the vicinity of this early roadway raised the likelihood that they related to a site of focused Revolutionary War era activity. The fact that these items were recovered in the vicinity of what was considered potentially to represent the remains of a small structure was seen to increase this likelihood.

Based on these findings, additional, more intensive subsurface investigation was recommended for the vicinity of the recovered eighteenth/early nineteenth century cultural remains in Sector B as part of a supplementary Phase IB survey. The goal of such an effort was first to determine whether the finds could be seen to represent focused cultural activity. If so, more elaborate sampling, involving among other things the execution of excavation units, would establish the spatial extent, nature, and integrity of the archaeological deposit and assess its potential to provide significant cultural information relating to the Revolutionary War era and the occupation of the Last Encampment or to some other aspect of eighteenth or early nineteenth century settlement activity. These latter questions would be dealt with as part of a Phase II site evaluation study.

Prior to initiating such an investigation, supplementary and more intensive Phase IB sampling was carried out in the subarea from which these finds were recovered in order to determine whether or not they are likely to represent focused cultural activity and, if so, to establish the spatial extent of the cultural deposit. Information gathered from this effort would facilitate the development of the Phase II scope and methodology and would allow emphasis of this study to be more productively focused.

During December 2001, screened hand-dug shovel test holes were systematically placed in a grid pattern around the locations from which the six items were recovered, using a sampling interval of eight to 13 feet (2.5 to 4 meters). Not a single cultural item was encountered in the supplementary test holes executed and no traces of possible structural remains were noted.

This is interpreted as indicating the items recovered during Phase IB sampling pertain to deposition reflecting casual rather than focused cultural activity. Such activity and the deposition relating to it would not be unusual in the vicinity of a major roadway in use during the period in which these items are likely to have been produced. The large number of soldiers and others who passed along this road during the Encampment period is likely to have been responsible for generating the deposition of a variety of items in a sparse and scattered pattern. The relative density of such a pattern is likely to increase nearer the roadway and decrease with greater distance from it, but would be unlikely to replicate patterns that would be associated with the remains of focused cultural behavior.

Taking advantage of the greatly improved visibility provided by the seasonal decline of ground cover and scrub foliage, the supplementary Phase IB sampling was accompanied by a second systematic walking reconnaissance of the vicinity of the roadway. It was hoped that this would enable investigators to identify the small depression bisected by a low dry-laid stone wall that Town of New Windsor Historian Glen Marshall had described as marking the location of the Provost's Post. With Mr. Marshall present and guided by his recollection of the site, reconnaissance was focused on a rocky knoll with a clear view of the former thoroughfare that stands just south of the old roadway.

To expose as the ground surface as well as possible, the knoll was cleared of much of its younger vegetation and accumulated leaves were raked out of all depressions not made by recent mechanical testing. No trace was found of the structural remains Mr. Marshall remembers visiting on several occasions. Operating under the assumption that these fragile remains may have been destroyed by the activity of testing equipment on the property, the area to the west and south of the knoll was systematically sampled by means of a series of screened, hand dug shovel test holes placed in roughly a grid pattern again at eight to 12.5-foot (2.5 to 4-meter) intervals. Mr. Marshall recalls that this was the location of the structure because the rocky mass of the knoll afforded it protection and visual

screening from the roadway (personal communication). It was considered logical for this to have been the site of activity associated with what was essentially a guard hut and watch station.

The systematic shovel testing failed to produce any material that might potentially be associated with Encampment era cultural activity, although two grey chert reduction flakes were recovered from one test hole just south of the knoll. Four additional test holes placed around this find spot did not encounter additional Native American cultural material.

Sampling of an anomalous depression on the east face of the knoll produced 13 badly oxidized iron nails, seven pieces of iron too poorly preserved for their function to be identified, and pieces of what appear to be carbonized sawn wood. The area just to the east and below this location shows evidence of a short trench having been excavated, but sampling yielded no cultural material. Two cuts in the bedrock to create two roughly rectangular depressions were noted adjacent to the anomaly that produced the iron and wood. No other clearly man-made alteration of the rock surface was noted. Sampling of five other anomalies noted in reconnaissance did not produce any cultural items.

The cultural material encountered could not be temporally categorized with accuracy. However, its location on the eastern edge of the knoll, commanding a clear view of the roadway, pointed to the likelihood of a function related to surveillance of traffic passing along it. It was considered less likely that the recovered items played a role related to the agricultural use of the property prior to and/or after the Encampment era.

The inconclusive findings of supplementary Phase IB sampling in this subarea, considered along with information from an individual with expert knowledge regarding the Revolutionary War era history of the area that identified this location as the site of the Provost's Post argued against discontinuing archaeological investigations at that point. Tightly-focused Phase II study of that small portion of the affected area was recommended in an attempt to clarify whether or not significant cultural remains pertaining to the Provost's Post are present within the project area.

LIMITED PHASE II INVESTIGATION

Introduction

Based on the data collected in the Phase I survey, the spatial extent of any structure and focused cultural activity that might have been present within the affected area would appear to have been restricted to the immediate vicinity of the anomaly identified on the rocky knoll just south of the old roadway that crosses the northern portion of the development parcel. It is here that further intensive investigation was recommended and subsequently carried out as part of the supplementary Phase IB sampling. Although the results of this field testing were not conclusive in indicating the presence of a potentially significant cultural resource, the proximity of this parcel to a significant historic site argued for a limited Phase II investigation of this subarea to be carried out to determine whether cultural resources associated with the National Register-listed Last Encampment of the Continental Army might be present. The fact that cultural remains of indeterminate age had been recovered from an anomaly in the vicinity of a known Revolutionary War structure created the potential that such a site was indeed present. The potential significance of cultural information contained in the remains of a structure of this type, small as it would have been, was found to merit further sampling. Consultation with the OPRHP Field Services Bureau confirmed this opinion.

Methodology

After consultation with representatives of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau and the Historic Sites Bureau, it was decided to employ a metal detector in a systematic sweep of the general area of the anomaly in an effort to better focus further sampling. This technique has shown a considerable degree of success in better defining the spatial extent of cultural material present and thereby narrowing the spatial extent of shovel testing at other Revolutionary War era military-related sites, according to Lois Feister and Joe McEvoy of the Historic Sites Bureau (personal communications).

Since brass, lead, tin and copper were considered to possibly be present on an eighteenth century military site, the metal detector would be set to record any type of metal encountered. The instrument would be carried in a series of contiguous transects across the surface of the rocky knoll and each

response would be marked with a numbered pin flag. These locations would then be sampled by means of a screened square shovel test measuring approximately 24 inches (60 centimeters) on each side. The recovered metal objects would be subjected to preliminary processing and classification.

Should possible eighteenth or early nineteenth century items be encountered, or should a relative concentration of cultural material be recorded, standard archaeological excavation units would be dug, operating under the assumption that the presence of greater numbers of cultural items is likely to reflect a focus of cultural activity, which in turn is likely to contain a relatively greater amount of potentially significant cultural information. These units would measure 40 inches (1 meter) on each side and be dug in arbitrary 4-inch (10-centimeter) levels within natural soil strata to maximize vertical control of recovered cultural items. Units would be terminated once 4 inches (10 centimeters) of culturally sterile soil had been excavated, the bottom of each excavation level would be drawn to scale and any cultural features encountered would be drawn and photodocumented. Cultural material encountered would be placed in a plastic bag noting the level at which it was found as well as the unit. Artifact processing, analysis and storage would be carried out at the Columbia Heritage laboratory facility in Newburgh, New York.

Field Investigation

In May 2002, contiguous metal detector transects were walked by the Principal Investigator, providing coverage of the rocky knoll on which the anomaly discussed above is located. Twenty three responses indicating the probable presence of metal were noted on the north side of the elevated area and on its east and west flanks, with only three on the south side. As outlined in the preceding section, each "hit" was investigated by means of a square shovel test whose contents are screened through 1/4-inch hardware cloth to facilitate the recovery of smaller cultural items.

No identifiable eighteenth or early nineteenth century items were recovered from these find spots. In all, 52 pieces of cultural material were encountered in five find spots, all located on the north side of the rocky knoll. The other responses were considered to represent false positives, since no metal object was located in shovel testing that extended into culturally sterile soil.

With the exception of seven pieces of amber bottle glass, all the material recovered as a result of metal detector-guided sampling consisted of iron, constituting 88.2% of the total. Items included wire nails, lengths of what appeared to have been fence wire, a claw hammer head and flat iron fragments whose function could not readily be identified.

The largest concentration of material, consisting of 40 items, was recovered from Find Spot 9. Located in a relatively shallow, flat area adjacent to the anomaly on the west side of the northern face of the knoll, this subarea was noted in supplementary Phase IB reconnaissance as containing evidence of possible cutting of the bedrock and the presence of a shallow trench that produced no cultural material when sampled.

Because a piece of charred wooden planking and 33 unidentified flat iron fragments, one with a punched hole, were recovered from this sampling hole (designated MD-9) along with six wire nails, and due to the proximity of this find spot to the anomaly mentioned above, this location was considered to have the greatest potential for having seen focused cultural activity. Consequently, two contiguous excavation units were placed here. These effectively encompassed the entire subarea of soil located between the vertical rise of the upper portion of the knoll and the flatter lower portion.

Designated Unit 1 and Unit 2, these excavations produced a total of 118 cultural items, consisting mostly of iron with six small pieces of charred or burned sawn wood, two glass fragments and a brass shell casing. Within the iron category, 61 wire nails constituted 60 percent, with flat iron pieces of unidentified function making up 22 percent and fittings, machine-made screws, and unidentifiable fragments accounting for the remainder. These items were recovered from strata of black, highly organic soil whose character seems to have been determined by the high content of decayed leaves present and the combustion that is reflected by the charred and burned wood that makes up part of the assemblage. Of this, only larger pieces showing evidence of sawing were retained. Both excavation units terminated in bedrock, with almost no developed soil horizon present.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

No cultural material was recovered from either the metal detector-guided test holes or the two excavation units that can be seen to relate to the eighteenth century occupation of this topographic feature. The range and proportion of

cultural items recovered seem to reflect the presence of a wooden tree stand or other hunting-related structure at this location during the twentieth century and the fact that this structure burned at some time. The crude modification of bedrock noted may have been related to the need to anchor the structure in an area where high bedrock precluded digging sufficiently deep holes for posts in the soil. The location would have provided a good vantage point for hunters.

Since no trace could be found of the remains of the small structure that Town Historian Glen Marshall recalls having been present in this immediate area only a few years ago, it must be concluded that these fragile and spatially limited remains were destroyed in the intervening period. This may have occurred as a result of heavy soil testing machinery passing across this part of the property. If the knoll in question was utilized as part of the Revolutionary War era effort to control access to the Last Encampment, no evidence of that effort appears to be present today. Cultural material encountered in this portion of the development property is seen to reflect sporadic nineteenth and twentieth century deposition, with the only focused deposit encountered appearing to pertain to twentieth century hunting-related activities.

The two items of Native American origin and the nails and glass thought possibly to relate to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, discussed as part of the Phase IB investigation, do not appear to represent focused cultural behavior and as such are seen to have little potential for yielding significant cultural information.

Based on these investigations, proposed development of this parcel is seen to have no effect on as-yet-undocumented, potentially significant archaeological remains. Consequently, no further archaeological investigation is recommended.